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data addition, data removal, data annotation, data deletion, and data append with respect to the first user selected data fields.

**REMARKS**

Appropriate corrections have been made to the title, drawings and specification. Claims 1-60 have been deleted and new claims 61-106 have been added. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application as amended are respectfully traversed.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-60 based on U.S. Patent No. 5,434,994 to Shaheen and U.S. Patent No. 4,853,843 to Ecklund. The rejections are moot in view of the new claims. However, in the interest of passage of the present application to allowance without further delay, and to the extent that Shaheen and Ecklund are relevant to the present invention, Applicant offers the remarks below with respect to Shaheen and Ecklund for the Examiner's consideration.

On the onset, it is noted that Shaheen is not a proper reference under 35 U.S.C. §102(b). The Shaheen patent issued after the filing date of the present application. Hence, Shaheen is at most a reference under §102(e).

The present invention is directed to a distributed, object-oriented database system with partitions at each location. Each partition stores different data (e.g., a local/user partition stores personal data, while a remote/host partition stores shared data) so as to in effect form 'layers' of data. The layering of data in effect enables the masking out of certain data in a layer. The multiple partitions are integrated into a 'chain' in such a way that the user sees a single integrated data view (analogous to layers of transparencies being placed on top of each other). One (e.g. a local/user) partition can store modifications to another (e.g., the host) partition, without affecting the remote partition, such that the user appears to have changed the local partition from their viewpoint, while others accessing the remote partition do not see the changes (or see their own personal changes, in the same way). Such modifications include not only additions and changes, but also deletions. Effectively, with respect to the user, the local partition can mask certain data in the common partition. Some or all of the changes stored in the local partition can be merged into the remote partition at any time, and the local partition is then emptied of the merged data. In this way, some or all of the 'private' data can be shared, or made 'public', as and when the user demands.

In a particular application of the selective modification of a partition aspect of the present invention described above, certain kinds of data on the remote partition (such as large lists) can be appended to or modified by the local data, instead of having to be entirely replaced by the local data. Another application of the present invention is used in the ability to 'update' (as perceived by the user) a read-only medium such as a CD-ROM, where the

CD-ROM is the 'remote' partition, and the local partition is stored on the user's hard disk, for example.

The system of the present invention is designed to work when some partitions are disconnected (e.g., missing, as when a CD-ROM is missing from its drive, or when the network is down). Also, by providing partitions of update data, it is able for one to deliver a partition to another user as a new partition for insertion into this user's integrated view. This is analogous to 'publishing' the data.

The foregoing aspects are now defined by the new claims submitted by this Amendment.

The Ecklund patent (U.S. Patent No. 4,853,843) does not anticipate or rendered obvious (i.e., for lack of an inventive step) the present invention. Ecklund disclosed a database system which is different from the present invention. The primary differences include the fact that in Ecklund, each partition is meant to be a copy or replica such that each partition stores the same data. This is contrasted to the present invention, in which the local partitions store update data representing changes to the data fields in the remote shared partition. Further, the merging process in the Ecklund system is meant to re-synchronize the replicated partitions after a communication failure. This is contrasted to the present invention in which merging is in the context of private and public data sets, and only some subset (as determined by the user) need to be merged, and only at the users request, if ever.

In view of these and other deficiencies of Ecklund, the present invention as defined by the new claims should be patentable over Ecklund.

Shaheen does not make up for the deficiencies of Ecklund. Shaheen is directed to a system in which data is replicated on two or more storage systems. A user initiated change is made directly to one of the data replica, in contrast to the present invention in which the user change is made to the local partition which contains update data and not the entire data replica of the common partition. Shaheen more specifically disclose the coordination of causing each data replica to become a duplicate of all other replicas.

Accordingly, Shaheen, like Ecklund, does not anticipate or render obvious the present invention as now defined by the new claims.

Concurrently submitted herewith is an Information Disclosure Statement including Form PTO-1449 citing an additional reference (U.S. Patent No. 5,313,646 to Hendricks) which Applicant recently came across. Applicant submits that Hendricks does not make up for the deficiencies of Shaheen and Ecklund. Hendricks likewise does not store update data in its private partitions. Instead, it copies the entire data files in its shared hierarchy which are to be modified into its private hierarchy for user modifications (referred as "copy-on-write" feature).

In view of all the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the present invention is patentable over the references of record. Early allowance of the present application is earnestly solicited.

Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to telephone the undersigned representative should there be any issue remaining in this case that may be expeditiously resolved by way of a telephone interview.

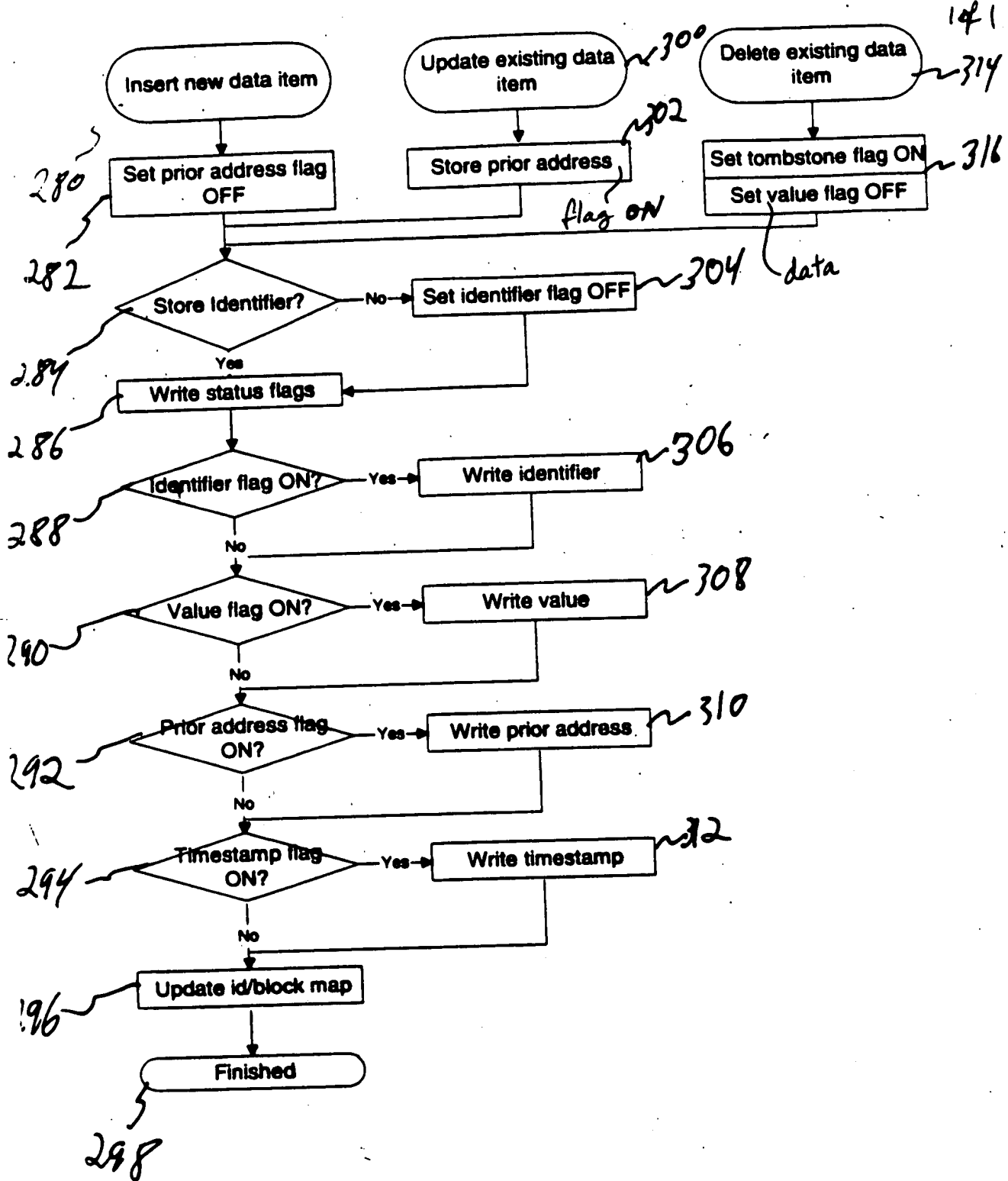
Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Wen Liu', written in black ink.

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FIGURE 12



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